



For Release: Tuesday, December 15, 2015

15-2411-BOS

NEW ENGLAND INFORMATION OFFICE: Boston, Mass.

Technical information: (617) 565-2327 BLSInfoBoston@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/new-england

Media contact: (617) 565-2326 BLSMediaBoston@bls.gov

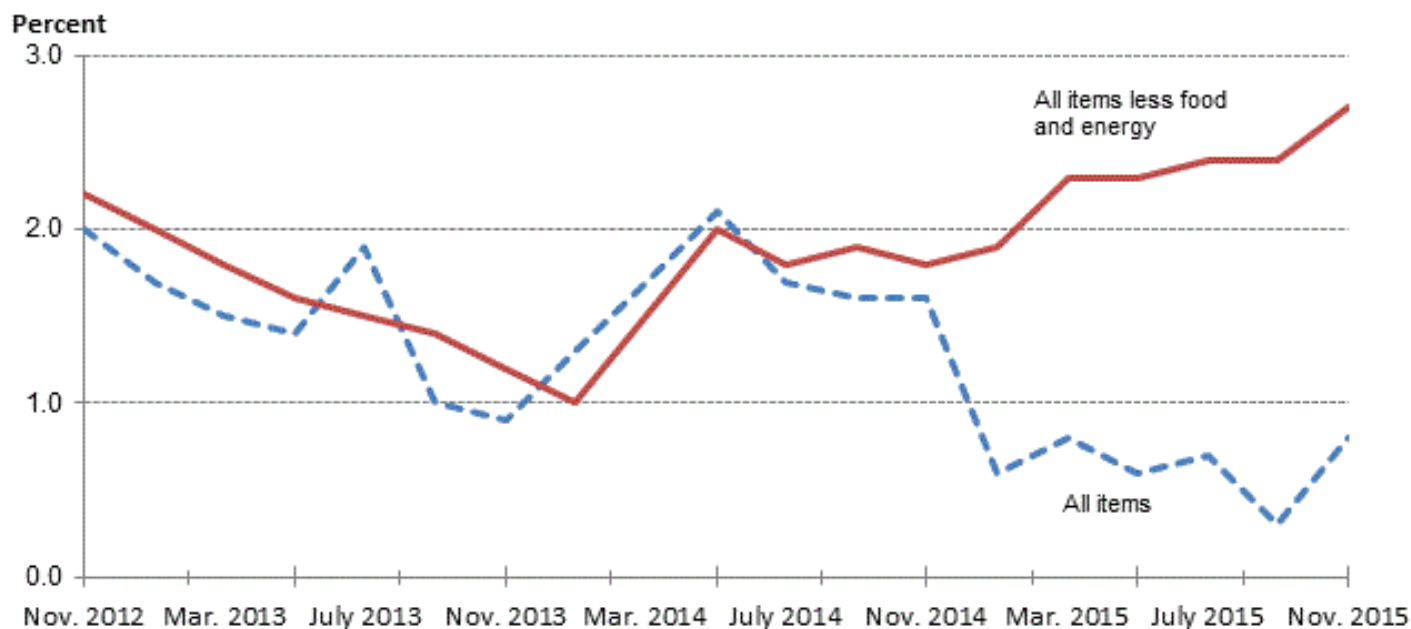
Consumer Price Index, Boston-Brockton-Nashua — November 2015

Area prices edged up 0.7 percent over two months; up 0.8 percent from a year ago

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Boston-Brockton-Nashua area edged up 0.7 percent in November, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that the two-month increase was mainly due to higher prices paid by area consumers for energy, up 5.1 percent and medical care, up 4.9 percent. Lower prices for shelter, down 0.3 percent over two months, and prices paid for recreation, down 1.7 percent, partially offset this increase. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bimonthly changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months the Boston CPI-U rose 0.8 percent. The increase was largely attributable to higher shelter and food prices, up 3.5 and 2.0 percent, respectively. (See [chart 1](#).) Lower energy prices paid by area consumers, down 19.2 percent, partially offset the modest increase.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, November 2012 - November 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices were unchanged since September. A rise in the prices for food away from home (0.3 percent), or restaurant prices, was offset by a decrease in grocery store prices, also known as food at home, down 0.1 percent over the two month period.

From November 2014 to November 2015 the index for food rose 2.0 percent due to higher grocery store prices (+1.2 percent) and higher restaurant prices (+3.4 percent).

Energy

The energy index was up 5.1 percent over the two months, mainly due to increases in the prices paid for utility piped gas (+54.1 percent) and electricity (+8.4 percent) as utilities introduced winter rate schedules. Decreases in prices paid for gasoline (-6.6 percent) partially moderated the rise in the energy index. Area motorists paid \$2.172 per gallon of gasoline in November.

Energy prices were down 19.2 percent from a year ago, attributable to lower gasoline prices, down 26.7 percent. Contributing to the decline were lower prices paid by area consumers for utility (piped) gas, down 16.0 percent from one year ago and electricity, down 4.6 percent over the same period.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged up 0.5 percent from September. Increases in the indexes for medical care (+4.9 percent) and education and communication (0.6 percent) led the advance but were partially offset by decreases in the indexes for recreation (-1.7 percent) and shelter (-0.3 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.7 percent, with higher shelter costs, rising 3.5 percent from November 2014, being the main cause of this increase. This marked the 53rd consecutive annual increase in the local shelter index.

CPI-W

In November, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 257.124. The CPI-W was up 0.7 percent over two months and increased 0.5 percent over the year.

The January 2016 Consumer Price Index for Boston-Brockton-Nashua is scheduled to be released on Friday, February 19, 2016, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.








































The index measures price change from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf>.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Mass.-N.H.-Maine-Conn. consolidated area covered in this release is comprised of Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk Counties and parts of Bristol, Hampden, and Worcester Counties in Massachusetts; parts of Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Strafford Counties in New Hampshire; part of York County in Maine; and part of Windham County in Connecticut.







Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service (800) 877-8339.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Ma.-N.H.-Maine-Conn., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015	Nov. 2014	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015
All items		256.643		258.407	0.8	0.7	
All items (1967 = 100)		745.940		751.066			
Food and beverages		256.579		256.296	1.7	-0.1	
Food		257.173		257.242	2.0	0.0	
Food at home		246.662	246.632	246.341	1.2	-0.1	-0.1
Food away from home		274.794		275.599	3.4	0.3	
Alcoholic beverages		253.893		249.978	-1.7	-1.5	
Housing		256.768		259.124	1.5	0.9	
Shelter		307.111	307.201	306.123	3.5	-0.3	-0.4
Rent of primary residence ⁽¹⁾		315.203	315.718	315.205	3.2	0.0	-0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences ⁽¹⁾ ^{(2) (3)}		326.383	327.227	327.738	4.2	0.4	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence ^{(1) (2) (3)}		326.383	327.227	327.738	4.2	0.4	0.2
Fuels and utilities		220.976		249.237	-11.1	12.8	
Household energy		181.690	179.747	209.264	-12.9	15.2	16.4
Energy services ⁽¹⁾		185.573	183.148	220.257	-8.2	18.7	20.3
Electricity ⁽¹⁾		220.402	218.187	238.965	-4.6	8.4	9.5
Utility (piped) gas service ⁽¹⁾		116.755	114.016	179.878	-16.0	54.1	57.8
Household furnishings and operations		129.254		128.426	1.0	-0.6	
Apparel		146.410		148.361	0.0	1.3	
Transportation		184.307		183.772	-7.5	-0.3	
Private transportation		182.906		181.045	-7.2	-1.0	
Motor fuel		200.126	187.666	186.961	-26.7	-6.6	-0.4
Gasoline (all types)		197.754	185.427	184.733	-26.7	-6.6	-0.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽⁴⁾		191.421	179.233	178.658	-27.6	-6.7	-0.3
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ^{(4) (5)}		211.864	199.652	198.423	-25.2	-6.3	-0.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽⁴⁾		210.684	199.652	198.134	-22.7	-6.0	-0.8
Medical care		606.668		636.328	6.6	4.9	
Recreation ⁽⁶⁾		117.436		115.481	1.1	-1.7	
Education and communication ⁽⁶⁾		155.090		155.978	5.1	0.6	
Other goods and services		445.508		448.796	0.3	0.7	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		188.975		187.504	-2.7	-0.8	
Commodities less food and beverages		153.430		151.385	-6.1	-1.3	
Nondurables less food and beverages		196.762		193.236	-9.1	-1.8	
Durables		110.940		110.293	-0.8	-0.6	
Services		317.564		322.437	3.0	1.5	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter		239.422		242.298	-0.5	1.2	
All items less medical care		243.060		243.930	0.4	0.4	
Commodities less food		157.433		155.313	-5.8	-1.3	
Nondurables		225.614		223.742	-3.2	-0.8	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Ma.-N.H.-Maine-Conn., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015	Nov. 2014	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015
Nondurables less food.....		199.844		196.315	-8.4	-1.8	
Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾		345.711		358.192	2.3	3.6	
Services less medical care services.....		297.920		300.798	2.4	1.0	
Energy		188.409	181.904	198.064	-19.2	5.1	8.9
All items less energy		266.850		267.886	2.6	0.4	
All items less food and energy		269.289		270.523	2.7	0.5	

Footnotes

(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) This index series underwent a change in composition in January 2010. The expenditure class now includes weight from secondary residences, and has been re-titled "Owners' equivalent rent of residences." The item stratum "Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence" excludes secondary residences.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(6) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

Note: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.